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September 1987

# MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE

A CO-OPERATIVE PUBLICATION OF THESE ATARI CLUBS:  
C.H.A.O.S. (CLANSING) - G.A.G. (FLINT)  
T.A.G. (SAGINAW) / BAY CITY / MIDLAND  
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G.K.A.U.G. (KALAMAZOO) - G.R.A.S.S. (GRAND RAPIDS)

## Atari News

— and COMMENT,  
Compiled by John Nagy

**ATARI STOCKWATCH:** Hovering around the \$14 mark, down a buck or so from a month ago. The company certainly seems to be making money. But are they making anything else?

**BLITTERLESS MEGAS** were seen being sold in SWEDEN. NEIL HARRIS confirmed this and stated that EUROPE continues to be a money pot for ATARI and thus particularly GERMANY and the surrounding area gets special attention. At another in the popular ATARIFEST series, this one at TORONTO August 15th and 16th, ATARI announced that the MEGA WAS IN FACT SHIPPING to dealers in CANADA and the US. The first domestic machines will ALSO be BLITTERLESS, although the chip is to be sent later to all owners, to be popped into a ready and willing open socket.

**MONO MONITOR BARGAIN:** How about a ST mono monitor for \$79? I read in ABACUS user group newsletter from SAN FRANCISCO that the FEDERATED stereo chain has them at \$79, regular price. From the prices I've seen, that almost is worth the airfare to go pick one up. Check it out!

On the games front: MINDSCAPE will publish "home computer" versions of ATARI ARCADE games such as PAPERBOY, GAUNTLET, ROAD RUNNER, and others.

It is important to remember that ATARI ARCADE GAMES and ATARI CORP are not really related... common criticism of ATARI for not having an ATARI computer version of ATARI MARBLE MADNESS

while a Commodore version has been out for a year now overlooks this fact. However, her's a list of ATARI CORP game releases to come ("shortly"):

2600: Croosbow, Donkey Kong, Donkey Kong Jr., Mouse Trap, Venture, QBERT, Kung Fu Master, Commando, Summer Games, Winter Games.

7800: Desert Falcon, Choplifter, Karateka, Touchdown Football, One-on-One Basketball, Sky Fox, Summer Games, Winter Games, Impossible Mission, Hat Trick.

**XE GAME SYSTEM/8-bit Computer SUPER Carts:** Hardball, Fight Night, Touchdown Football, One-on-One, Ballblazer, Rescue on Fractalus, Archon, Lode Runner, Blue Max, Midnight Magic, Croosbow, Food Fight, Battlezone, Star Raiders II, Flight Simulatore II, Missile Command, Blast 'Em. (Thanks NEIL HARRIS for the lists as announced at the Summer Consumer Electronics Show.)

ALAN REEVE made his mark with some nice PD and later Commercial handlers for the now cheap ATARI CX85 keypad. Alan also has some other products, and recently announced a complete development system for the 8-bit ATARI computers, still under development in his Chicago based company. DIAMOND will be a complete programming environment similar in operation to GEM on the ST. Although this has been tried by a few programmers before (RE: GOS, the ZOBIAN RAT, etc.), no equivalent to the C-64 GEOS has yet really arrived. DIAMOND may be the first. Designed to fully use the expanded memory ATARI (either the 130XE or any upgraded machine), it will include windows and icons, alert boxes and mouse support addressable from any language or application software. Included are to be DIAMOND WRITE, DIAMOND DRAW, DIAMOND PUBLISH, and a plethora of desk accessories. Release date is a hazy "fall 87".

# CASTLE COMMUNICATIONS

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# CASTLE COMMUNICATIONS

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**MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE 2 September 1987**

# M.A.M. this Month

Editors:

Rich and Judy Barnes (517) 349-0513

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This publication is the official newsletter of several independent groups of Atari 8-bit and 16-bit computer users. It is intended for the information and education of their members as well as the dissemination of Atari related information. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the respective author and are not in any way official opinions of the associated user groups.

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## Publisher's Note

by JOHN NAGY  
(517) 487-5646

I am reminded that two issues ago, we marked the first anniversary of MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE. I have been too busy to take note til just now...

When we began over a year ago (as MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE), we were small and innocent of the details of running a magazine... since then we grew to serve eight ATARI clubs in Michigan (and got plenty of requests for involvement from clubs outside the state too!). Then there were seven, and now... six.

The Washtenaw ATARI Users Group (WAUG) has begun their own small monthly newsletter, and they will no longer be part of MAM. Since they only charge \$5 for renewals of a year's membership, WAUG's 40-plus membership was unwilling and unable to fund their part of MAM.

We will miss them and the fine articles that they provided while part of MAM.

Meanwhile, I hope to continue to work for more inter-club communication, and who knows, Jackson's CACE, Detroit's MACE and MAGIC, as well as WAUG may all be involved with the remaining MAM clubs in some future publications... We may know more about those possibilities after the ATARI MAGIC SHOW in Detroit, going on as this issue of MAM is in the mail. Watch next month for complete reviews, pictures, and opinions of that event.

In other business, we will be trying to get MAM into your hands in the first week of each month. That means we need to mail by the 27th or so each month, and that means we need to be at the printers by the 22nd or so, and THAT means we NEED all the materials by the 17th or so! That gives us a few frazzled days to sort, chop, copy, hunt, retype, and stick it all together. So, since most clubs wanted MAM earlier, we will need your contributions earlier too. I realize that this squeezes a few clubs at the end of the month, but that's the cost of getting it out sooner. I hope this will work out.

Remember, MAM is YOUR magazine, no matter WHICH club you are in. Let us know what YOU want more, less, or none of! We can be anything you want us to be, but only if we know what you want!!!



# Atari News


MORE COLLECTED BITS...By John Nagy

You read about the hot upcoming STAR TREK GAME for the ST in my column a few months back... well, it may NOT be forthcoming after all. Says STEVE DUNPHEY of the Rhode Island ACE club, SIMON and SHUSTER game division folks are incensed that beta copies got out and circulated in that cesspool of pirates called BBS's... so much so that they have threatened to pull the game entirely. Steve saw a copy and wrote about it, all very positive and eagerly awaiting the commercial release so he could have a copy, and his article was widely reprinted. Next, he was on the hot seat for "participating" in the piracy. Hey, he saw it and tried his best to help promote the company and the upcoming product. Lets hope that 1) The thing actually gets released and is as good as it looks, and 2) that pirates don't kill the marketplace. I commend Steve for not keeping nor passing a hot copy, and thank him for his consitant help in ATARI news gathering.

Herb Parsons, in his August '87 column for the NORTH TEXAS ATARI COMPUTER TEAM (NTACT), discussed some distasteful front-row piracy at their ATARIFEST. It seems that BEST ELECTRONICS sells a ROM cart for the ST that is "MAGIC SAC COMPATIBLE"... David Small, creator of the MAGIC SAC (a MACINTOSH EMULATOR cart and software), doesn't get one cent of the sales made by BEST of this blatantly copied EPROM, as he stated in CURRENT NOTES magazine a few months back. David actually spoke at length with the BEST sales rep at the D.C. ATARIFEST. The rep went into great detail about how much money you could save by buying the BEST version instead of buying the "too expensive" REAL MAGIC-SAC... little knowing who he was talking to!

It appears from these reports that BEST is actually proud of ripping off the work of some of our BEST, er, sorry, most inventive programmers. Yet BEST continues to appear at ATARIFEST after ATARIFEST, and countless club newsletters carry their ads. ATARI stepped in and absolutely FORBADE the Pittsburg Atarifest from allowing BLACK PATCH SALES from having a booth, even though they wanted a lot of room and offered to pay all in advance. BLACK PATCH had angered too many buyer with "PAY NOW, DELIVER SOMEDAY" problems... and has since gone bankrupt. We should hope that ATARI would say SOMETHING about BEST... even though BEST has a fascinating collection of bizzare and hard-to-find ATARI miscellany.

Personally, I don't need an ATARI belt buckle (or an ad for MAM!) so badly that I will support a company that steals from the rest of the industry.

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- 5) Other entrants will receive a 50% discount on our SBDCK Screen disk #2 (the compilation of screens from this contest)
- 6) Contest is for the ATARI 8-BIT version only. Coming soon: an ST contest. #

7) And a random drawing will occur for all participants involved for some goodies of our choice. Who knows, maybe you will win - but only if you enter.

8) Deadline is Nov. 15, 1987. Please send your screen(s) to the above address in care of: **MARS BDCK CONTEST.**

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Membership dues are \$12.00 per year and entitle the member to a 1 year subscription to the Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, access to our other libraries and facilities, as well as access to our other resources. Dues may be paid at any C.H.A.O.S. meeting or by mail. If not using an official Membership Application, please include your Name, Address, Phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

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Lansing, MI 48901

General meetings of the membership take place several times a year. 8-bit and 16-bit Special Interest Group meetings take place monthly. S.T.I.N.G. (S.T. Interest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the SECOND Saturday of the month. The 8-bit SIG Atari, for 400/800, and XL/XE owners, takes place on the THIRD Saturday of the month. The meetings take place at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10:00 am sharp and last until 1:00 pm. Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting that interests them. To get to a meeting, take East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

Illegal copying, or any violation of copyright laws, is not condoned or allowed at any C.H.A.O.S. sponsored function, including the club BBS.

## ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICERS OF CHAOS

| Position        | Name             | Phone #  |
|-----------------|------------------|----------|
| President       | Leo Sell         | 349-0404 |
| Vice President  | John Baker       | 641-4430 |
| Sec'y-Treasur.  | Gary Ferris      | 393-2593 |
| 8-bit Rep       | Marvin Goldstein | 332-4160 |
| 16-bit Rep      | John Johnson     | 355-4219 |
| Membership      | Gary Ferris      | 393-2593 |
| Library Mgr.    | John Baker       | 641-4430 |
| ST Librarian    | Sally Nagy       | 484-1976 |
| XL/XE Librarian | Bill Johnson     | 675-7166 |
| Publ. Librarian | Richard Evans    | 351-2381 |
| ST Publ. Libr.  | Chet Kapusinski  | 676-4539 |
| XL/XE SIG Cor.  | Guy Hurt         | 484-7675 |
| ST SIG Coordn.  | Brian Goluska    | 332-4415 |
| BBS Sysop       | John Nagy        | 487-5646 |
| BBS Librarian   | John Lewis       | 339-1793 |
| Newsltr Editor  | Rich Barnes      | 349-0513 |
| Advertising     | Jeff Bone        | 321-5510 |

## Presidential Address

by Leo Sell

Summer's over now. Time to look ahead toward the things we need to do before another Michigan winter comes on - too early for most of us.

One of the things that also seems to occur as Fall begins is that people take an interest in their computers once again. As you begin to get computer-active, I hope you'll consider how you can help out yourself and your fellow Atarians by getting more involved in CHAOS. Our activities and support require the time and energy of many people. Needless to say, we can always use more help. If you are willing to volunteer, either for a specific job such as Publications Librarian, or just in general, call me and let me know of your willingness. Many of you will help if asked, but we are not sure who you are. So volunteer first!!

I am writing this fresh from a trip to Cedar Point. During the ride back I started thinking about how much the Tramline Atari Corporation is

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like the Iron Dragon roller coaster, new this year. The initial climb upward was a matter of some trepidation as we climbed toward the unknown. The same was true when we viewed the Tramiel acquisition with both alarm and excitement. Then came the rush of new product announcements, like the initial hurdling of the coaster, until we were finally brought up short with the realization that many of the announced products were never to be. The continued dips and curves of the coaster, with the accompanying rushes of excitement and then disdain, remind me of how the Atari community now views the Tramiel Atari Corporation and its product announcements these days. At one point the Iron Dragon dips into mists that obscure your senses momentarily, not unlike the smokescreen of a good PR man like Neil Harris. When the ride was finally over, my son and I both felt that it was not what we expected, and yet we enjoyed it very much. We got a lot of value out of it. I am certain that when the mist finally clears and Atarians get off the coaster that is our relationship with Atari Corporation, we will look around and think, "Not what I expected, but worth it".

There has never been more value for your computer dollar than Atari, and that value, under the Tramiel's leadership, is better than ever.

Happy Computing.

## Meeting Minutes

8-BIT CHAOS MEETING  
by Gary Ferris, Sec/Treas.

As the summer vacation draws to a close, the beaches should lose some of the competitive advantage they've held all summer. We expect attendance to rise dramatically as people get back in school and turn their attention back towards computing.

About 20 faithful 8-bitters showed up for the August 16 meeting. Although attendance has suffered, we still are holding steady in membership at about the 150 mark as opposed to many clubs which have reported declining memberships.

In the opening free for all discussion, the status of several announced but as yet unavailable products from Atari was discussed. Volunteers to staff the C.H.A.O.S. tables at the MAGIC Atarifest in Detroit were requested.

John Baker announced an exciting new service available from the C.H.A.O.S. software

library. You can now rent the entire 8-bit or ST libraries for a month for \$65 or both for \$100/mo. With well over 200 2-sided 8-bit disks and an ST selection which is over 100 disks and growing in dramatic fashion, this can provide an inexpensive way to increase your personal library.

The August Disk of the Month was a rather unique one in that all the software on it was on German origin. There was a game which was actually written to serve as an ad for a German toothpaste and a very nice graphics demo program.

Don't forget, coming up in October is the annual C.H.A.O.S. auction. members can bring any item they no longer need or want (need not be computer related) and sell them to other members. This allows you to get back some of your investment and possibly pick up some bargains in the process. The club gets a 10% commission which helps defray costs of providing services such as the BBS and software library.

## Meeting Minutes

AUGUST ST-UTTERINGS  
by Brian Goluska

The ST special interest group of CHAOS meets the 2nd Saturday of each month, at the Physics-Astronomy building of MSU. See the CHAOS title page for directions.

CHAOS ST attendance has held up well through the slow summer months, with 18 people attending in August, the same as in July. Due to lack of an RF equipped 520, we were unable to use the overhead video. Seems that most of the regular participants have older 520's, without the RF, or have gone to the 1040. So we still have the need for volunteers to bring an RF 520 to meetings. But while we lacked some hardware, software was abundantly demonstrated.

I started with a demo and discussion of DBASIC from DTACK. This is a VERY DIFFERENT approach to marketing software. However, as a BASIC and alternative to Atari BASIC, it is fast, does not support GEM, and is too different to discuss in this short space. See the review of DBASIC elsewhere in this issue.

Sally Nagy then showed a "Disk of the Month", after she had put up descriptions of 6 new library disks on the blackboard! The DOM had utilities: A program to read ST disk







## GENESEE ATARI GROUP

### 8 Eight is Enough

G.A.G. Disks for September.

Well, I'm back on the job! I'm feeling much better after my stay in the hospital, and with all the time on my hands I've finally been able to go through the piles of disks that I received over the past few months.

It's good to be out of that hospital, and out of the reach of that evil nurse, Erma Wolfgang. Have you ever wondered what hospitals do with dull needles? Nurse Wolfgang must get them wholesale. After the first day, she didn't give me shots, she took target practice! I wouldn't stay still long enough for her to take aim.

Here is a tip if you are planning a stay at the hospital. Don't piss off the day nurse! Especially if she is the one who will be taking out your Foley Catheter. Yeouch!!!

Anyway, here is a list of new GAG disks (all 22 of them!). My thanks to the MACE club in Detroit, CHAOS, SCAT, and PACE for some great disks.

Thanks to John Baker of CHAOS, we now have an almost complete collection of Analog and Antic disks. If you are looking for a particular program that was published in either of these publications, or want to get the source code, we now have it available!

We have added 5 new printshop icon disks to our collection. Disk 204 comes from Australia's MACE club. Dave Pettit also went through all the oddball disks I had laying around my desk and compiled them into disk #223. Disk 224 is actually all of the icons that were on two previous GAG disks (62 and 97), but are now together on a single disk in Printshop format. This will save some time if you wish to use it with the Printshop program. Disk 225 is a collection contributed by Faye Hanners. Disk 226 is a collection of icons/borders/fonts contributed by Dave Pettit.

Thanks folks!

Disk 260 is a sound utility/demo program called POKEY PLAYER. It will allow you to compose music, and add it to your programs.

The music will play at the same time the program is running. A nice feature to add to your games. There are sample programs also on the disks.

Disk 208 is a Public Domain Action Runtime program. You must own the Action cartridge/program to use this disk. You can now compile your action programs so they will run on any Atari computer, WITHOUT the Action cartridge. I haven't tested this program out, so I'm not sure how well it works. But it sure sounds interesting!

Also for the Action language people, Disk 209 contains an assortment of Action programs that I have accumulated over the past few months. Some are pretty handy, others are not that usefull, but if you study the coding you may pick up a programming trick or two.

Disk 210 contains a modified version of the Amis BBS program, called PK AMIS. This program requires the BASIC XE Cartridge and a 130xe Atari. It takes advantage of the additional memory for more features. Also, now that I'm on the subject, I will be putting out an updated version of AMISXM. This program was just uploaded to Compuserve, and is supposed to have many of the previous bugs cleaned out. I will have it available next month. If you need it sooner, let me know and I'll send you a copy.

Disk 212 contains an updated version of Atari's DOS 2.5, called 2.5P. This program adds many new features to DOS 2.5, and it is still 100% compatible. It is designed mainly for users of Happy-enhanced disk drives. You can add the underline or bracket characters "[ ]" in the filename. Other features include Fast Write, Fast-Buffered-Write with verify, which allows Ultra Speed SIO of the Happy. Also, there are three Ramdisk files for use with the XE, or XL computers. There are many other features also. I used this program, along with the COPYMATE sector copier, to make this months disks. It's the fastest copyier around! Also on this disk, you will find a TOS desktop program, much like that of the Atari ST computer. It uses the Joystick to move around an arrow, and seems to work pretty good.

Disk 213 is another modified DOS. This disk takes DOS 2.0s and modifies it to read double density. Unfortunately, it only reads/writes in double density so it will not be of much use to single density users. This disk is in double density format, so you must own a





# TRI-CITY ATARI GROUP

## T.A.G. - SAGINAW, BAY CITY, MIDLAND

### NEXT MEETING:

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows: September 12, 1987 October 10, 1987 \*\*\* OFFICERS of TAG are as follows:

LeRoy Valley President 686-6796  
Marty Schmidt Treasurer/Sec. 792-6029  
Al Jennings 8-bit Disk lib. 790-1980  
Joe Manelis ST Disk Lib. 790-0993  
George Stuart News Letter Ed. 892-7545

Club dues are \$20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Michigan Atari Magazine. Support for both the 8-bits and the ST's, and full access to the club's public domain library. We currently have about 90 disks in the 8-bit library and 30 in the ST library. You can get copies of these disks AT NO CHARGE if you bring your own disk to copy on (time permitting) at the regular meeting. If you don't have a disk with you, you can get the 8-bit disks for \$1.00 each and the ST disks for \$2.00 each. Non-TAG members can get copies of the 8-bit disks for \$2.00 each and the ST disks for \$4.00 each. If you need to renew, do it now! If you haven't joined yet, then do it now!

## Presidential Address

Well, despite everything I tried (including feigning a terminal (hee hee) illness) I still managed to get elected for another term. If you notice a little different flavor to the newsletter, it's because we now have a Newsletter editor. Congratulations George Stuart! George will be handling everything except for ST Notes, the presidential address, and the ST portion of relics to relish. He's

already saved me a lot of work, and it looks like he's doing a great job! His role becomes even more important, since I will no longer be attending the 8-bit portion of the meetings!

### \*\*\* HOT FLASHES FROM THE FUTURE! \*\*\*

The month of September brings IBM amongst us! "Hey, what's going on here," shouts the guy in the back, "I thought that this was an Atari club!" Quite true, but the product is PC-Ditto and it allows ST owners to emulate an honest to goodness IBM PC. The program works VERY well, so be on hand and see LeRoy Valley put it through it's paces.

On the 8-bit side we'll have an adventure game called 222B Baker St. (Sherlock Holmes) by Datasoft. This is an 8-bit board game with up to four players. You have 30 different scenes and extra data disks are available.

### \*\*\* RELICS TO RELISH \*\*\*

Competition was fierce as the elections drew near. But reason prevailed and no one slung any mud (well maybe one or two did) and when the final tally was taken every candidate had a sweeping victory. Actually its tough not to when you are the only candidate. Well TAG finally split-up with separate ST and 8-bit demos. I enjoyed this arrangement much better as I didn't have to sit through any boring ST demos. Just kidding, the ST is a great machine, I just don't need the power it offers.

Why don't you come to the next meeting and give this long needed change a try. If you like it tell someone, if you don't tell someone.

LeRoy has an old Atari 800 given to TAG that should be ready for the next meeting. If you have some dusty stuff laying around that you don't want why not donate it to TAG.

Al Jennings demoed a public domain game called Dandy. Dandy is a 26 level dungeon adventure in which cooperation among players, rather than competition, is the key to success. You and up to three more players must get past denizens of

varying danger; you lose strength each time a monster rams you, and you must constantly stock up on food and then remember to replenish your strength by consuming food units when your health deteriorates. Should you lose all strength, you wind up in limbo, but another player can revive you by shooting an arrow into one of the many hearts scattered throughout the dungeon. Complete documentation is included with the bootable disk.

On the ST side of the curtain, LeRoy had the promised "HOT AUGUST BYTE" disk ready for distribution. The disk looked VERY professional, with a neat printed label and a double width title. The software included on the "HOT AUGUST BYTE" was:

DISCAT v1.3 -- A disk cataloging program that reads disk directories and prints out disk labels on several size labels. DCOFY v2.0 -- A DOS like utility that offers full file handling capabilities, the ability to format 82 track 10 sector Twister disks, and built in Arcing utilities. DLII -- A hard disk utility that reorganizes a hard drive to maximize performance. And boy does it work!! TURTLE v2.15 -- THE ultimate hard disk backup program. With this baby you can back up 5 MB in about 5 minutes! TWISTER 80 & 82 -- Twister formatter from STart magazine modified to fix several bugs and to support 82 track formatting. FLOPPYP -- Short program that makes folders look like disk drives. PRINTERS -- Desktop accessory that lets you configure your printer quickly and conveniently.

LeRoy demoed all of the above programs, and this disk was indeed HOT. All seven copies that he brought disappeared rather quickly, but don't worry, it'll be available in our library!

#### \*\*\*\*\* EXPIRATION NOTICE \*\*\*\*\*

Remember, once your membership expires you'll receive NO more issues of the Michigan Atari Magazine! \*\*\*\*\* EBV \*\*\*\*\*

8-bit Equipment Volunteers:

Gerry Reno.....Monitor  
Ted Beachamp.....Disk drive

ST Equipment Volunteers:

Tom Wheeler.....Monitor  
Bryant Lafreniere...1040ST

Once again, a big THANKS to all of you who loan your equipment to the club. PLEASE, if you're going to be late, or can't make it, CALL!! It's not fair to the rest of the people when there's no monitor, or drive for the system!

## BITS AND PIECES

FROM THE

## BATTLE CREEK ATARI USER GROUP

Next Meeting Sept. 10  
At the Vo-Ed Building

Well summer is over and we are getting back in the swing again. Hope some people were able to get over to the Atari Magic Show.

As I mentioned last month, we will be demoing TURBO BASIC. This is a public domain language that will really speed up your programs. For the programmer, it allows many new commands from the Atari BASICs. To demo TURBO's power we will be also demoing SUPER STATES a new version of the old Solid States program. Both will be featured as our disks of the month. We will be having a special this month Two disks for the price of our normal one DOM. Disk one is the double sided TURBO BASIC plus SUPER STATES. This is a B.C.A.U.G exclusive!

More about Super States. As I just mentioned it is a new version of Solid States. It comes with new 3-D images on the disk. This new version has many new features and runs faster than the old one. If you have an XL or XE computer you can run the compiled version which runs very fast. We will be talking about the state of the art in CAD (Computer Aided Design) including some new developments in the field.

| B.C.A.U.G. OFFICERS |                        |          |
|---------------------|------------------------|----------|
| President           | Chuck Steele           | 964-1701 |
| Treasurer           | Josephine Yeager       | 968-8401 |
| Member/News         | Tom Siemietkowski      | 963-4475 |
| Librarian           | Todd Haris<br>Dan Egan | 962-2549 |
| Secretary           | Mike Engle             | 964-3033 |

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\*\*\* UNCLASSIFIED AD: \*\*\*

FOR SALE: 1050 Disk drive with 1050 duplicator board installed. 1 year old. Also XM301 300 baud modem and Atari 1020 color printer/plotter with paper and spare pens. Numerous game disks and cartridges -- the whole bundle for \$200. Contact Al Paquette in Bay City at (517) 684-9429.





## GRAND RAPIDS ATARI SYSTEMS SUPPORTERS

G.R.A.S.S. is on summer break.

No Meeting in AUGUST, join us again in SEPTEMBER, when we resume meeting at the WYOMING LIBRARY, 3350 Michael S.W., on the first Wednesday of each month. The Informal meeting begins at 6:30 PM, with the formal meeting starting at 8 PM.

President: Ron Fargo  
Treasurer: George Nosky  
Secretary: Chuck Baughman

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→ → → → → → → → → → → →



## WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUP



NO MEETINGS PLANNED FOR JULY & AUGUST  
SEP 8 TOPIC ANNOUNCED IN SUMMER NEWSLETTER

NO MEETING IN AUGUST! Next meeting SEPTEMBER 8, at WINES SCHOOL unless otherwise notified. The "permanent" meeting place may be changed due to expenses and convenience. Investigation of locations at Eastern Michigan University and the University of Michigan is in progress.

This is the LAST issue of MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE of which W.A.U.G. will be a formal part. Our own monthly newsletter goes to all of our members, and MAM costs run higher than our low membership rate can cover. Separate subscriptions to MAM are available to any members that want to keep getting it. Correspond with any other club in MAM for details.

WAUG serves Southeastern Michigan in Ann Arbor and the nearby area. Memberships are \$10 for 10 meetings (one year) and only \$5 for renewals. Members get our newsletter and are able to buy 8-bit library disks for \$2, ST disks for \$5.

TREASURE CHEST BBS: 313-439-2816 (1200/300)  
CLEAR THINKING BBS: 313-761-2444 (1200/300)  
MOLIN'S DEN BBS: 313-420-0407 (1200/300)  
By Mail: 39 W. Main #6, Milan, MI 48160



## GREATER KALAMAZOO ATARI USERS GROUP

by Dan Youngs 616-388-3164

G.K.A.U.G. meets the 2nd saturday of each month. The Dues are \$20.00 per year. We hold our meetings are Kalamazoo College Dewing Hall.

The next meeting will be September 12th at 11:00.

Where did the summer go? It seems as though it was just spring and now its fall. Well thats O.K., we can now start our club meetings again. Some things that are important for you to know.

\*We have not received our last 2 months of analog again. It seems as as though this happens to us every year! And I for one am getting sick of it! Why can't analog get our subscription right?

\*The treasury has 137.39 in it but we still need to pay for 2 disk drives and we also have an analog subscription due. (We will not pay it until we get this lastest problem solved!)

\*We the officers want to thank our regulars for all the support that they give us have given us this summer. A special thats to Dave Brynt for all the help on the BBS.

\*There has been a lot of people calling me and wondering why we don't support the ST any better then we do. I'll tell you why, nobody wants to do any of the work. They seem to think that someone else should organize the ST club and do all the work for them to enjoy. Life does not work that way you must pay the price to get the enjoyment out. Enough said.

\*The library will be at the next meeting. It really looks great.

\*At our September meeting, Frank will talk about all the work he has put into upgrading his 1200XL. This has made it compatible with all other Atari 8bit computers.

\*We will give a demo of our BBS and answer any questions that you may have on how to run it.

\*We will also have a Demo for BBS anamator. You use this to make the introductory screen on our BBS. We need people to try and make a screen for us to use, so get your artist talent ready.

\*Again, The next meeting will be September 12th at 11:00. Plan on being there!

# //////FEATURE SECTION\\\\\\\\

## Atari News

Toronto Atari Show  
by Jerry Cross (GAG)

On August 15-16, Atari-Canada hosted a computer show in Toronto. Steve Mileski (GLASS) and myself went along as guests of Michtron to do some legwork for the Atari-Magic show, and got a first hand look at several new products, including the MEGA-ST.

This show was organized by Atari-Canada to give Canadian Atari dealers their first look at the new products. Invited to the show were such manufacturers as ICD, Michtron, SDI, Sierra, Abacuss, Data Pacific, Migraph, Regent, Supra, and the list goes on.

Most of the products shown have been reviewed in past MAM issues, but a few new products were announced.

Supra will soon release a new 2400 baud modem. Priced at only \$189, it will feature 100% Hayes compatibility, built in phone number memory for 8 numbers, plus many other features found on today's modems. It looks very much like the Hayes 1200 modem, but is about 2/3 the size. It's compact size makes it easy to carry around, and takes up little room on your desk. It's price is obviously the most impressive point, and Supra will include this in their usergroup discount plans.

Innagem announced their new product called Innagem Agenda +. Basically, this is just a software version of Deskmart, and I was not very impressed.

Antic was showing their CAD 3-D program, along with Cyberpaint and Animator. They were showing several fantastic demo's created with these programs, and promised to send me a disk with them on it. Thanks Antic!

ICD announced several new products for the ST. ST-Express is now being shipped (yeah!). They also will soon release several hardware products designed for hard disk do-it-yourselfer's, such as controllers, interfaces, cables, and more. Included is a new controller that is supposed to be much faster than the rest. Since I am not much of a hardware hacker, much of the details went over my head. Since the tech sheets were not available yet, I couldn't bring back much information, but more info will be available at the Magic show. Also announced was a new hard

drive for the MEGA-ST. This drive is packaged in a stackable case that matches the drive/processor unit of the MEGA-ST. No price was announced.

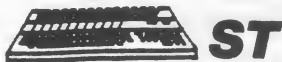
Atari announced that the MEGA-ST will be shipped in a few days to Canadian dealers, and is now being shipped to American developers. The computers being shipped to developers will not include the Blitter chip, but Atari will send them later. They will be able to simply plug them into the pre-installed sockets. Atari also showed the laser printer, but had very little information about it. Although they did print out some samples, they did not have any desktop publishing software. The sample copies were sort of blah, but the printing was sharp. Atari also brought along their PC-Clone and Game machine.

Sierra introduced their new game called THEXDER. According to their flyer, Thexder is a unique, sophisticated arcade game. Players pilot an armored robot through multiple attack scenarios like battlefields, caves, cargo holds, and spaceship interiors. In Japan, Thexder is one of the best selling computer games of all time, with over one-half million units sold to date.

Hybrid Arts announced their Midi-Maze is finally complete and will be shipped by the time you read this. The first place they will sell it will be at the Magic show, where they are hosting another Midi-maze tournament. Data Pacific was on hand to show their new interface that allows Atari-ST drives to format and write Mac disks. This is necessary to support their Magic-Sac emulator cartridge.

Legend Software Systems introduced their new 16 track polyphonic Midi sequencer for the ST called The Final Cut. This program is billed as a simple yet powerful program to use, record and edit 16 tracks of music, unlimited overdubs, special effects (echo, compress, transpose), and animated tape matching interface. The suggest price is \$174.99.

Finally, Practical Solutions showed off their line of monitor interfaces. Monitor master is a switchbox that switches between an Atari Monochrome monitor and RGB or monochrome monitor, or even a VCR. This will save some playing around with cables if you switch monitors a lot. Also shown was an interface called VideoKey. This allows you to convert from RGB to composite, and is designed specifically for ST's without RF modulators. You can tape the graphics off the ST and onto a VCR or view them on a composite monitor.

**ST**

ST Notes  
by LeRoy Valley (TAG)

There I was, sitting in the middle of a mass of humanity. The largest user group meeting that I'd ever attended. IBM users surrounding me on all sides. In the front a well dressed (three piece suit) man was calmly demoing some public domain software for the IBM's. As he finished showing off what he called "simply brilliant" software, he meticulously replaced the 5 1/4" disk in it's envelope, wiped his hands on a white linen towel, then said in a high nasal voice "If anybody would like a copy of this, please form in a single line. If you didn't bring your own disk, you can procure one from the club."

Lining up for my copy, I felt a teeny bit conspicuous. Everybody else had on three piece suits. Hell, their kids had on two piece suits! And here I was with my Charlie Daniels Band t-shirt, and my old faded blue jeans. As I stood in line, there was a very noticeable gap ahead of me and behind me. Kind of like I had the plague or something! Patiently awaiting my turn, I could hear a polite low buzz of conversation.

Finally it was my turn. Mr. Pinstripe handed me a 5 1/4" disk. As he turned to get another I said, "Excuse me, but I need a 3.5" disk." He slowly looked at my clothes and stammered, as if in awe, "Y-You own a System 2?"

"Heck no, I can't afford to buy one of those expensive toys." I replied. With a look of relief he came back "Well, I didn't think YOU could possibly own a System 2. Which clone do you own?"

"I don't have a clone. I've got an Atari ST." The polite buzz stopped abruptly, almost as if I said a dirty word. Everyone gathered around Mr. Pinstripe. "Do you even have any 3.5" copies of this?", I asked. Mr. Pinstripe patiently lectured me like a little child, "Just because you've got a 3.5" drive, doesn't mean that you can run ANY software available on 3.5" disks." Snickering he continued, "How could you ever think that you could run IBM," he thundered those three letters out, "on an A-Atari- hee-hee..." With that he broke up laughing.

Calmly I stood there and said, "I've got an emulator that allows me to run almost every IBM program ever written." If the room had become quiet as a library before, it now became a mortuary. With a shocked expression Mr.

Pinstripe said in a nervous voice, "Well, that must have been an extremely expensive hardware add on!"

"Oh no," I replied cheerily, "It's a software program called PC- Ditto and it only costs about \$85.00." "Oh, software," he scoffed, "then it must run abysmally slow." I could see that he was beginning to regain some of his shaken confidence.

"Actually, I can run at about 80% of the speed of a PC XT" as I watched him squirm I twisted the dagger in a little farther, "and I've still got 703K left on my 1040 ST after running the emulation program."

At this point something clicked in Mr. Pinstripes head...No really, I actually heard it! Looking at my attire once again he said rather sharply, "I've had enough of this nonsense. Everyone knows that you can't emulate an IBM on an Atari. Unless you can prove your claims, please leave."

"If I can prove it, will you get me a copy of your disk of the month on a 3.5" disk?", I asked. Shuffling his feet from side to side he replied, "Ok, I'll get your disk...But I've got to have absolute proof!"

Leaving the meeting I quickly ran to my car and brought in my trusty 1040 ST and color monitor.

I heard muttering as I was setting it up, "Nice looking keyboard!...It's so compact...Only \$900...It can't REALLY run IBM software...Can it?" Suppressing a grin I quickly booted up my system. As the normal GEM screen appeared on my monitor, I heard Mr. Pinstripe exclaim "Aha! You're mistaken, I can see that you might be able to run MacIntosh software what with all of those icons and windows, but you'll never run IBM software on that." Looking pointedly at him I said, "Well, it's true that I can also run MacIntosh software...but that's another story."

Inserting my PC Ditto disk I ran the PC Ditto program and then asked, "Anyone got a copy of IBM DOS 3.30? I'd hate to be accused of running a modified copy." From somewhere in the midst of the group a disk appeared. Slipping it into my drive, I pressed return and the drive began to whirl. IBM users anxiously crowded around my machine to see what was going to happen. Suddenly the screen lit up with the familiar words 'IBM DOS 3.30 copywrite...' and a collective gasp filled the room. The ST had actually gotten the first hurdle!

Waving my hands towards the 1040 I said "Go ahead and run anything you want. It won't run IBM basic, but then again, neither will any of

All worked fine and performed as expected. Looking shell shocked, Mr. Pinstripe handed me 3.5" disk and mumbled something like "I still think that he modified the insides of that computer." Packing up my 1040 ST and monitor I headed for the door. Enroute I picked up a small entourage asking when our next ST meeting was, where could I order an ST from, etc. The IBM meeting was now in a shambles.

\*\*\*\*\*

Let me start off by saying that when you purchase PC Ditto, it does not have "batteries included". You need some type of IBM PC DOS, like MS DOS or IBM DOS 2.0, 3.3, etc. Once you procure a DOS on a 3.5" disk, you're ready to enter the world of Big Blue.

Under the disk option, you can specify drive A: as either an internal or external drive. This does not mean that the drive physically is an internal or external, but that you can call drive a A: or you can call drive b A:. This permits you to run software on an external 5.25" drive which requires drive A: to run properly...very well thought out. Here you can also specify whether drive B: is a 3.5" or 5.25" drive and whether or not you have a hard drive (although currently there is only support for one partition - more on that later).

either four colors in medium rez or 16 colors in low rez. Once you are done configuring, PCDMENU.PRG actually modifies PC-DITTO.PRG.

After clicking on PC-DITTO.PRГ the title screen comes up with information concerning available memory (703K on a 1 MB system and 384K on a 512K system), current default drive, and the video mode. At this point we place in our trusty IBM DOS disk and press return. Shortly, we'll be greeted with the standard message "IBM DOS X.XX copywrite...". At this point, your Atari ST is now an IBM. I have yet to find a program that won't run on it (other than IBM basica -- but GW Basic works, so who cares!).

At this point, there isn't much to review. The machine looks, feels, and operates like an IBM PC. Some programs (Lotus in particular) run very slowly, while others (dBase III+) run extremely fast (read Impressed here!). Please note that all programs that I have tried (about 50) are unmodified IBM programs!! Calculations in Lotus ran typically about 80% of the speed of an XT, but the problem isn't in number crunching, but in screen updating. It's so silloooooowwww. I'll stick to VIP in this case.

Concerning hard drive support: IBM can only work with one partition at a time. This is not PC Ditto's fault, it is simply a limitation of DOS. To get around this Avante Garde wrote software to treat partitions as individual drives. Thus you have drives 0,1,2, and 3 for the four partitions C,D,E, and F. Currently they support 4 partitions, but there are some bugs in the support, and it doesn't seem to work for most people (me included). They are working on a fix (which will support up to 12 partitions), and the fix should be available by the time you read this. It is possible to set up a partition as a bootable DOS drive, and still have a bootable GEM drive. Once again, a well thought out extension!

Concerning 3.5" floppy support: IBM DOS (version 3.20 and lower) automatically assumes that your drive is a double sided 40 track disk. To set up your system to get a full 720K out of your double sided drive is quite a chore. The documentation is very unclear, and it's even worse if you want an 80 track single sided bootable disk! However, it is possible to do it (just look up how to create a CONFIG.SYS file your DOS manual, and look up DRIVER.SYS). A lot of help can be found on Genie, in the message base area (category 13 topic 28).

What more can I say? The product is great and does everything that it claims. It's well worth \$90 if you want to run IBM software. Future enhancements include blitter support, mouse support, automatic time retrieval from the GEM system, and increased efficiency.







## Review Eight

### REVIEW: MERCENARY

SCI-FI Adventure Game for One Player  
Released by Datasoft

Retail \$34.95, often available at \$19.95  
Reviewed by JEFF BONE (C.H.A.O.S.)

With minimum effort your spaceship glides through the cosmos. While on auto pilot, you stretch your weary body and relax. Not a care in the world. Wait a minute... something's wrong. Your on-board computer indicates that vital ship systems are failing. A crash is imminent as the ship is directed to the closet planet. Brace yourself. Wham! You're alive. Immediately, the computer flashes pertinent information concerning the current situation. You've landed on the planet Targ. The planet is currently embroiled in a vicious civil war between the Pylars and the Mechanoids. Your ship is destroyed. Somehow, you've got to find a way to leave. But, it doesn't look like it will be soon. And it doesn't look like it will be easy...

In reviewing this game I must make a few things known. This is the first computer game I have purchased by Datasoft. I am not a big fan of Vector graphics. It also takes an extra-special role playing game to keep my attention. Of course, all of this sounds like it's adding up to a negative review. On the contrary! I am quickly becoming addicted to it. Here are the reasons why.

Upon opening the box you discover the game disk, instruction booklet and a "tourist information" pamphlet regarding Targ. Also, blueprints of the orbital complex circling Targ and all military installations are included. All of these are printed in attractive colors with excellent attention to detail.

O.K. let's learn how to play. Geez, this instruction booklet seems awful thin. That's because there are very few rules. But, this is one of the good points about the game. It allows you to begin play immediately. Most of the decisions you will be forced to make are yes or no questions. Therefore, you need press only one key to continue. Other situations require you to make an action with your joystick or press the fire button.

Once the game has begun you quickly find out why it's called Mercenary. Before long you meet members of both sides of the civil war. Each side offers you cash to perform services that will aid their case. But, which side should you work for? Which side is "good"? Indeed, the rules imply that there is no

obvious correct side to work for. In fact, there are several ways of successfully leaving the planet. But, be warned. If you make a wrong decision you will have to pay the consequences. This is an example of another good point about this game. Flexibility.

This game also has a refreshing amount of creative thought behind it. It's filled with subtle hints of humor that break up the game. I will share a few of them with you. In one situation I was asked if I wanted to buy a spaceship at super cheap price. Aha! a chance to be illogical. Let's see if I can crash this game. I smugly pressed the "n" key. The screen flashed "are you crazy? This is a great price." I responded no again. "hello, is anybody out there?" was the response. I said no again. "would somebody please find me some intelligent life?" was the retort. By now I was smashing the "n" key with savage force. On and on it went. Finally, out of total exhaustion I pressed the "y" key. I believe the computer's last response was something to the effect of "was your mother an amoeba?". On another occasion I came across a roadsign while scouting the the countryside in my hovercraft. The roadsign bore the dreaded Commodore logo. With deliberate aim, I gleefully pressed the fire button and blew the roadsign away. The screen flashed "good shooting!". Shortly thereafter I came upon a roadsign bearing the Atari logo. Once again the opportunity to act illogical overcame me. With a great deal of guilt I pressed the fire button. The roadsign exploded. "TRAITOR!" cried the computer. Within seconds I was attacked by three alien spaceships who mercilessly shot me down. 'Nuff said.

Other good points include the fact that you can never be killed. You can be set back or in other ways delayed. But, never anything too serious. Also, the Vector graphics are very sharp and seem appropriate for a sci-fi game of this nature. And best of all, any winning situation can be saved for starting the long awaited MERCENARY II.

Of course, this game is not for everybody. It will appeal to role playing gamers with a taste for sci-fi. But, I can honestly say that anybody with a sense of adventure will enjoy this game. Also, don't be fooled by the claim that this is a flight simulator (as the game box claims). The most difficult thing to master about flight in this game is learning how interpret the ship's compass. I don't consider this a flaw, it's just a little misleading.

On the software report card I give this game an "A".

Now, if I could just find out what to do with this irate Mechanoid I've just kidnapped...

# ATARIWRITER-PLUS PRINTER DRIVERS

|                         | PRO-<br>WRITER | NEC<br>8023 | SG-10                     | PANASONIC<br>KX-P1080 | SMITH-COR<br>D-100 | EPSON<br>FX-80 | EPSON<br>RX-80 | LEGEND<br>1080 | BMC-<br>BX80 | MANN-TALLY<br>CTI<br>EPS. MX-80 |
|-------------------------|----------------|-------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|---------------------------------|
|                         |                |             |                           |                       |                    |                |                |                |              |                                 |
| Init. every line        | Blank          | *           | *                         | *                     | *                  | *              | *              | *              | *            | 27 85 0                         |
| Line Feed & C/R         | 155            | *           | *                         | *                     | *                  | *              | 10             | *              | *            | 141                             |
| Underline OFF           | 27 89          | *           | 27 45 0                   | *                     | *                  | *              | *              | *              | *            | *                               |
| Underline ON            | 27 88          | *           | 27 45 1                   | *                     | *                  | *              | *              | *              | *            | *                               |
| Backspace               | 8              | *           | *                         | *                     | *                  | *              | *              | *              | *            | *                               |
| Elongate OFF            | 15             | *           | 27 87 0                   | *                     | *                  | *              | *              | *              | *            | *                               |
| Elongate ON             | 14             | *           | 27 87 1                   | *                     | *                  | *              | *              | *              | *            | *                               |
| Bold OFF                | 27 34          | *           | 27 70                     | *                     | *                  | *              | 27 72          | 27 72          | *            | 27 70 27 72                     |
|                         |                |             |                           |                       |                    |                | 27 70          |                |              |                                 |
| Bold ON                 | 27 33          | *           | 27 69                     | *                     | *                  | *              | 27 71          | 27 71          | *            | 27 69 27 71                     |
|                         |                |             |                           |                       |                    |                | 27 69          |                |              |                                 |
| UP 1/2 line (Super)     | -              | -           | -                         | -                     | -                  | -              | -              | -              | -            | 27 186 27 83 0                  |
|                         |                |             |                           |                       |                    |                |                |                |              | 18                              |
| DOWN 1/2 line (Sub)     | -              | -           | -                         | -                     | -                  | -              | -              | -              | -            | 27 74 18 27 83 1                |
| Down 1/2 line & C/R     | -              | -           | -                         | -                     | -                  | -              | -              | -              | -            | 27 74 18 -                      |
|                         |                |             |                           |                       |                    |                |                |                |              | 13                              |
| Return W/O LF           | 13             | 155         | *                         | *                     | *                  | *              | -              | 13             | *            | - 141                           |
| Fonts (1 - 9):          |                |             |                           |                       |                    |                |                |                |              |                                 |
| Pica                    | 27 78          | *           | 27 84 27 53 27 72 27 66 1 | 27 80                 | *                  | *              | 27 64          | 27 80          | 27 64        | 27 80 27 64                     |
| Elite                   | 27 69          | -           | 27 66 2                   | 27 77                 | *                  | *              | *              | *              | -            | 27 77 -                         |
| Compressed ON           | 27 81          | *           | 27 66 3                   | 15                    | *                  | *              | *              | 27 33 4        | 15           | 27 15 27 69                     |
| Compressed OFF          | -              | -           | -                         | 18                    | *                  | *              | -              | -              | 146          | 18 -                            |
| Proportional ON         | 27 80          | 27 69       | 27 112 1                  | -                     | 27 112 1           | -              | -              | -              | -            | - -                             |
| Proportional OFF        | -              | -           | -                         | -                     | 27 112 0           | -              | -              | -              | -            | - -                             |
| Italics ON              | -              | -           | 27 52                     | *                     | *                  | *              | *              | 27 82 19       | 27 52        | * *                             |
| Italics OFF             | -              | -           | -                         | 27 53                 | *                  | *              | *              | -              | 27 53        | * -                             |
| Near Letter Quality ON  | -              | -           | 27 66 4                   | -                     | -                  | -              | -              | -              | -            | 27 120 1 -                      |
| Near Letter Quality OFF | -              | -           | -                         | -                     | -                  | -              | -              | -              | -            | 27 120 0 -                      |
| Superscripts ON         | -              | -           | 27 83 0                   | *                     | -                  | 27 83 0        | *              | -              | -            | - -                             |
| Subscripts ON           | -              | -           | 27 83 1                   | *                     | -                  | 27 83 1        | *              | -              | -            | - -                             |
| Scripts OFF             | -              | -           | 27 84                     | *                     | -                  | 27 84          | *              | -              | -            | - -                             |
| Underline ON            | 27 88          | *           | 27 45 1                   | *                     | *                  | *              | *              | *              | *            | * *                             |
| Underline OFF           | 27 89          | *           | 27 45 0                   | *                     | *                  | *              | *              | *              | *            | * *                             |
| Double Strike           | -              | -           | 27 71                     | -                     | -                  | -              | -              | -              | -            | - 27 71                         |
| Reset to Default        | -              | -           | -                         | -                     | -                  | -              | -              | 27 64          | -            | - -                             |
| Normal C.S. Select      | -              | -           | -                         | -                     | -                  | -              | -              | 27 82 10       | -            | - -                             |

The above is a compilation of Printer Drivers for the Atariwriter+, published in various ATARI CLUB Newsletters during the last few months. Many thanks to:

Bill Lurie, LA-ACE - Prowriter, Legend 1080, and MMC-BX80.

Randy McSorley, PACUS - NEC 8023.

Bill Zinn, ABACUS - SG-10.

Greg Porter, PACUS - Panasonic KX-P1080, SMITH-COR D-100, and Epson FX-80.

Terry Watkins, HACKS - Epson RX-80.

Ton Neitzel, S&P&A&C&E - MX-10 (Dip Switch 1-8 should be OFF).

Marty Stickle, JAGG - Mannesmann Tally, CTI, and Epson MX-80.

# **ST Review**

DBASIC from DTACK

Review by Brian Goluska (C.H.A.O.S.)

This is a unique product with a unique marketing strategy. DTACK Grounded Inc. sent a master disk, many labels, and some manuals to the user's group, with the permission to distribute copies of the disk using the official labels. Apparently DTACK intends to make its wages from future sales of the manual - at \$ 42.95 each, about the cost of a best selling game ( although half to quarter the cost of other programming languages ).

So what is DBASIC anyway? It's a super fast BASIC that doesn't support GEM or TOS. Read that sentence again, and let it sink in. Doesn't support GEM or TOS? Correct! DBASIC is its own system environment. It uses the 68000 processor and the huge ST memory as an empty box, for your DBASIC program to use as you will. No VDI or AES between DBASIC and the system.

At this point I have to say that people will either love or hate DBASIC very quickly. People judge languages based on their own frame of reference and goals. Some will pick a feature, love it, and love DBASIC. Others will miss a feature that they had under TOS, and throw DBASIC away without exploring any further. I can't summarize the entire package enough to tell you whether you will love it or leave it, but I can mention some points:

DBASIC is very fast compared to Atari ST BASIC. A graphics demo program that took 2 1/2 minutes using ST BASIC was under 11 seconds with DBASIC.

No mouse with DBASIC. That's right, and no joysticks either. Maybe a clever programmer could read the hardware directly, but most of us Basic programmers will be limited to keyboard input.

The DBASIC "screen editor" is much easier to use than ST BASIC's. Specifically, if you need to change a line, you arrow to it, make the change, and RETURN. You can also change the line number, and reuse the line, as you could on the Atari 800. In fact, the whole programming environment reminded me of the easier 800 environment, when compared to ST BASIC.

No easy TOS reading of DBASIC disks, or DBASIC reading of TOS disks. DBASIC uses its own disk system, which is faster and denser than TOS,

but incompatible. TOS won't show DBASIC files. DBASIC won't read TOS directories. DBASIC will read sectors from TOS disks, but the programmer must write the code to interpret this, sector by sector.

This makes conversion of ST BASIC programs to DBASIC even harder. I've converted a few hundred lines, and most of the conversion has been easy (skipping the mouse and sound commands that DBASIC doesn't have). But gosh, I wish I didn't have to rekey the lines.

On the plus side for DBASIC, however, is its speed, its better handling of integer vs. floating point numbers, and especially its ease of learning/use. DBASIC is much more traditional than ST BASIC. If you know Basic on the 8-bit machine, you can pick up on DBASIC very easily. Learning ST BASIC, and the specialty calls of TOS/GEM, can be pretty rough for the home user. How much housekeeping code do you want to write before you can run your ST BASIC program?

In conclusion, I'll summarize my personal experience with DBASIC vs. ST BASIC: Wow, it's fast. Ouch, no mouse. Wow, it's fast enough that I can do a good job using arrow keys. Ouch, I can't load my ST BASIC programs, instead I need to rekey my program. Wow, it's simpler to program. Ouch, no fancy GEM stuff.

As with any programming language, the programmer must match the tools to the needs. I think that DBASIC may be the choice for certain types of work. If you want to be closer to the machine, and want to get more of the 68000's potential speed, you should consider DBASIC.

## Report

INTERVIEW: Hard Drive User's Group  
by Ron Kovacs  
Reprinted from Z-Magazine

This is an interview with Chuck Leazott of the Hard Disk Users Group and the NETWORK: Atari BBS in San Antonio Texas. The interview was conducted on August 13, 1987.

RON: Good day Sir, Please tell our readers about the HDUG, and why you started this User Group?

MRZ: OK, (DEEP BREATH). HDUG (HARD DISK USER GROUP) IS DESIGNED AROUND SYSOPS THAT HAVE THE YEARNING TO OPERATE A HARD DRIVE WITH THE ATARI COMPUTERS.

IT'S REALLY FOR EVERYONE WISHING TO RUN A HD, BUT ARE AFRAID TO START DUE TO A LACK OF KNOWLEDGE.

WE STARTED THE GROUP AS A RESULT OF A CONVERSATION WITH TOM HARKER AT ICD. SINCE THEY ARE NOW SUPPORTING HD'S, WE NEEDED A PLACE TO COORDINATE ALL THE HD ACTIVITY. THUS, HDUG WAS BORN. I HAVE TO GIVE CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE, AND IT WAS REALLY TOM'S IDEA. SINCE HE DIDN'T REALLY HAVE THE TIME, I TOOK IT UPON MYSELF TO GOPHER IT.

RON: Were you running a BBS system before HDUG existed?

MRZ: YES, I HAD A SIMPLE SYSTEM (STARTED WITH AMIS, OF ALL THINGS).

AFTER TALKING TO TOM, I BOUGHT A HD.

I'VE BEEN INTO BBS'N SINCE 1982, AND STARTED WITH A SINGLE 1050 (AND "NO" RAMDISK). USING ATARI DOS 3.0 DIDN'T REALLY TICKLE ME.

RON: I know what you mean!!! What would a perspective HD user get out of joining this user group?

MRZ: WELL, IT DEPENDS ON A LOT OF THINGS. THE NEWSLETTER IDEA IS A DEVICE SETUP TO SPREAD NEWS ON HD SYSTEMS, AND THE HOW'S, WHERE'S, AND EVEN WHY'S OF USING A HARD DRIVE RATHER THAN A FLOPPY/RAMDISK COMBINATION.

YOU HAVE TO REALIZE THAT IN THE FIRST PLACE, YOU HAVE TO HAVE \$\$\$ TO GET THE HD, BUT IT DOESN'T HURT FOR TOO LONG.

RON: Sounds interesting, How about some membership instructions.

MRZ: SURE... WE CHOSE A VERY LOW COST FOR MEMBERSHIP. IT TAKES QUITE A BIT OF TIME TO GET THE DATA TOGETHER FOR THE NEWSLETTER (YOU KNOW ALL ABOUT THAT PART), AND PRINTING COSTS ARE NO PICNIC. SO, \$18 FOR A 1 YEAR SUBSCRIPTION TO THE NL SOUNDED REASONABLE. THE NL IS CURRENTLY A QUARTERLY, AND SEEMS TO BE GETTING OFF ON THE RIGHT TRACK.

FOLKS CAN JOIN HDUG BY WRITING TO:

NETWORK: HDUG  
5831 SUN BAY  
SAN ANTONIO, TX  
78244

Voice: 512-662-9764

Modem: 512-662-9765 (ANY TIME/BAUD)

WE ASK THAT YOU PLEASE INCLUDE ANY DATA THAT YOU WISH TO HAVE INSERTED IN THE NL. THINGS LIKE LOCAL BBS'S AND USER GROUPS. ALSO, IF YOU HAVE A HARD DRIVE SETUP, WE WOULD REALLY LIKE TO KNOW WHAT COMPONENTS IT CONSISTS OF.

RON: Talking about componets, Do you include both 8 and 16-bit in your group?

MRZ: YES. IF YOU SUPPORT ATARI, WE SUPPORT

YOU. ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING THAT ATARI EQUIPMENT CAN HANDLE IN THE HARD DISK INDUSTRY WE WANT TO KNOW ABOUT. ALL INPUTS COME FROM THE MEMBERS OF THE GROUP. IF YOU DON'T TELL US, WE DON'T KNOW.....YET.

RON: What other offers are available to members?

MRZ: OH, THERE ARE MANY DISCOUNTS ON PRODUCTS FROM LOTS OF FOLKS. ONCE WE ESTABLISH "RELATIONSHIPS" WITH COMPANIES, WE USUALLY CAN GET SOME FORM OF DISCOUNT ON HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE FOR THE HD SYSTEMS. FOR EXAMPLE, THERE ARE 2 NEW "BACKUP" UTILITIES DESIGNED TO HELP THE HARD CORE USERS BACKUP THEIR SYSTEMS TO FLOPPY AND HD.

FLASHBACK! AND HARDBACK (FROM ICD AND ORION MICRO SYSTEMS, RESPECTIVELY) ARE OFFERED TO MEMBERS WITH AT A SUBSTANTIAL DISCOUNT. ALSO, HARWARE IS OFFERD AT A DISCOUNT.

RON: I have read a few messages on the Zmag BBS about users looking for hard disk information and repair. Does your group assist with helping members or offering members repair information or a service?

MRZ: WELL, YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE HARD DISK USER GROUP IS UNIQUE IN THE RESPECT THAT IT'S TOTALLY A "MAIL-ORDER" USER GROUP.

ANY CORRESPONDENCE IS ON MODEMS AND BBS'S THAT HELP SUPPORT US...LIKE YOUR SYSTEM. SO, WHEN A MEMBER HAS PROBLEMS OR QUESTIONS, WE CAN LEAD THEM TO THE RIGHT PLACE (AND CHEAPEST) TO GET THE PROBLEM SOLVED.

SOME THINGS WE CAN HANDLE IN THE MESSAGE BASES BUT OTHERS, OF COURSE, HAVE TO BE REFERED.

RON: What would you suggest (Hard Disks) for new hard disk buyers?

MRZ: HMMM...THAT'S TOUCHY, SINCE I DEAL WITH A LOT OF DIFFERENT PLACES AND DON'T LIKE PLAYING FAVORITES (EVEN THOUGH I HAVE SOME). BUT, LET'S SEE...ICD IS ONE COMPANY THAT WILL RESEARCH PROBLEMS WITH SYSTEMS THEY SELL, AND OTHER SYSTEMS THAT YOU HAVE. LURIE AND ASSOCIATES HANDLE THEIR NEW "BTL" HD SYSTEMS, AND OF COURSE THERE'S ALWAYS SEAGATE, INC., WHICH REALLY KNOWS THE IN'S AND OUT'S OF THE "THEORY" BEHIND HD SYSTEMS.

RON: Sounds like a lot of work for a new hard disk buyer.

I suppose you would suggest an MIO to your future HD buyers, are there any other interfaces available to Atari users?

MRZ: WELL, AGAIN...I HAVE MY FAVORITES, BUT THERE ARE NUMEROUS SYSTEMS TO USE. SUPRA HAS AN INTERFACE DESIGNED FOR BOTH ATARI 8/16 BIT



SYSTEMS. THE BTL IS USEFUL, AND IS QUITE SIMILAR TO ICD'S MIO INTERFACE. SINCE I HAVE AN MIO, I HAVE TO SAY THAT IT'S PERFECT FOR MY NEEDS.

I'M NOT SURE WHAT THE DRIVE SPEC CAPACITY IS ON THE OTHER COMPANIES' INTERFACES, BUT USING SPARTADOS AND THE MIO WILL ALLOW A PERSON TO RUN A WHOPPING 128 MEGABYTES ON A \$59.95 8-BIT ATARI COMPUTER WITHOUT A BIT OF TROUBLE. I RUN 120 MEGS.

RON: Before we terminate this interview, what features are available on the Network Atari BBS and what are the future plans for HDUG?

MRZ: WELL, WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF A CONFLICT HERE AT NETWORK... WE HAVE TO MAKE EVERYONE HAPPY, WHICH IS OUR BUSINESS, BUT TRYING TO FIND THE BEST BBS PROGRAM TO LET US USE ALL 120 MEGS ON-LINE IS A CHORE. CURRENTLY, LIKE YOURSELF, WE RUN THE OASIS BBS.

RON: (Last question)

Do you have information about ICD news for the months ahead, and expectations on the user group?

MRZ: WELL, I CAN SAY THAT AFTER SPEAKING WITH THE CREW AT ICD, THEY EXPECT TO RELEASE ALL THE NEW PRODUCTS IN A MAD RUSH. I'VE BEEN TOLD THAT IT WILL BE BEFORE CHRISTMAS, BUT DON'T TAKE THAT WRONG. I ASKED TOM IF THEY WERE WAITING FOR THE XMAS RUSH, AND HE SORTA CHUCKLED AND SAID ABSOLUTELY NOT. ONE OF THE SLATED PRODUCTS, SPARTADOS 4 ELITE, HAS BEEN CANCELLED, BUT THEY WILL TAKE ALL THOSE FILES AND PROBABLY INCLUDE THEM INTO THE "TOOLS" DISK.

THIS SOUNDS TERRIFIC, AND I'VE SEEN SOME OF THOSE TOOLS IN ACTION AT THE ICD OFFICE. WE CAN EXPECT TO BE TREATED WITH AN ARMLoad OF THINGS THAT WE'VE ALL BEEN PATIENTLY WAITING FOR.

AS FOR THE HARD DISK USER GROUP, I'M WORKING ON SOME "TOOLS" MYSELF, AND HAVE ENLISTED THE PROGRAMMING EFFORTS OF ONE OF THE "SLEEPER" PROGRAMMERS IN THE 8-BIT COMMUNITY. DON PEASLEY IS HIS NAME, AND YOU CAN ALL REST ASSURED THAT YOU'LL BE HEARING MANY EXCITING THINGS FROM HIM.

NOTE: TO ALL YOUR READERS... PLEASE DON'T CALL MY VOICE NUMBER AT 3AM THINKING IT'S THE BBS. HEH.

RON: Ok Chuck, I want to thank you for this interview. I hope we have covered a few of the important aspects and will be calling on you after the release of your next newsletter.

## Review

The Ten-Best P/D Programs  
for the 8-Bit Atari  
by Jerry Cross (G.A.G.)

Recently I have been reading articles in some Atari magazines that have listed the most popular Atari commercial programs. And just like with the movie reviews, I disagreed with most of them. So, I figured it was time I put out my own list.

Over the past two years, I have looked at hundreds of public domain programs. Some were just fantastic, and others (many, many others) were not worth the disk space. But there are a number of programs that really stand out. These are the programs that should have been made commercial. But the author, in a brief fit of generosity, made public domain. These are the programs that sit in the "privileged" area of my desk, since I always seem to reach for these programs.

This list is mostly for those people who just purchased an Atari. These are some of the most useful and fun programs available, and all are available from usergroups at next to nothing. These programs will put you on the right track until you can afford to purchase the exact programs you are looking for. It would also answer the often asked question "So what can you do with your computer anyway?"

1. TEXTPRO by Mike Collins and Ronnie Riche. Once upon a time, COMPUTE magazine published an excellent word processing program called SpeedScript. This program was a blessing to Atari users! At that time, there were very few good p/d word processors available, and you ended up purchasing one of the commercial packages like AtariWriter. Several months later, TEXTPRO was released. This program took up where SpeedScript left off. It added several powerful macro features, RS232 support, additional commands, and allowed the use of several Atari DOS's. You were no longer restricted to DOS 2.5! In addition, the complete package included detailed documentation, help screens, and several useful sample macro files. To date, this program fills all of my home wordprocessing needs. There are a few features missing, and it would be nice to see it support the additional memory of the 130XE's. But this program is just the thing for the average Atari user.

2. EXPRESS by Keith Ledbetter; actually, any EXPRESS program...well, actually, any program by Keith Ledbetter is powerful! EXPRESS is probably the most powerful, feature packed

|||||

terminal program for the Atari 8-bit computers.

There are currently 3-versions (1030/XM301, 850 compatible, and MPP). Recent upgrades now feature text windows, R-time cartridge support, CRC-Xmodem downloading and lots more. EXPRESS's dialing menu offers an auto-calling feature that is extremely useful. Just mark the BBS's you want to call, and the program will call them, one at a time, until it comes across a BBS. No more constantly typing in numbers when a BBS is busy. There is simply not enough room here to describe all of the features. Still not impressed? Well, Atari has chosen this program to be included with their new 1200 baud modem, and Supra now packages Express with their modems equipped with a Supra interface. So, is there any doubt about adding this to the top-ten list?

3. PBS CHESS. This program features excellent graphics and gives you a fair competitor. Granted, this is not for the very-advanced Chess players, but it will play a good game. This is an excellent program for new players.

4. First Aid Tutorial. This is a sound/graphics demo-tutorial that teaches kids CPR. With the help of an Adult (to answer kids questions), this program is an excellent way to instruct children in the art of giving life-supporting first aid in case of emergency.

I let my brother borrow this program for his cub-scout pack, and it was a big hit! This program was originally a commercial program, but was released into the public domain. The graphics are excellent!

5. Turbo-Basic. This program comes all the way from Germany. It is a complete package that includes the Turbo-language, Compiler, sample programs, and complete documentation. Programs written in Turbo, then compressed, are extremely fast. Additional commands give you better graphic control, and far more power than Atari Basic. A must have for beginner programmers!

6. Action P/D Runtime Package. This program is just now making an impact in the Atari community. Many older Atari users purchased the Action language from OSS, but until now were unable to share their programs with other users. It was necessary to purchase the Action cartridge in order to run other Action programs. The only alternative was to buy a Runtime package from OSS (not cheap!). But now, there is a public domain version. By using this package, you can compile the Action program into a binary load program that will run on any Atari computer. This should open up a flood of great new public domain programs.

7. LaserType. This program is an educational/game program. The object is to shoot down falling "letters" before they touch the ground. By hitting the matching letter on

the keyboard, you activate a laser that shoots away the attackers. Sounds boring, huh? Well, add some great music background, excellent graphics, and several difficulty levels, and you now have a great typing practice program. Lets face it, if you want to learn to type fast and accurate, the only way is to practice. At least now it's not so boring.

8. CESDEMO. This may not be your idea of a must have program, but every time I see this graphic demo I'm amazed. This program was shown a few years ago at the Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago. Atari used this program to "draw" people into their booth. (It worked!).

9. Dandy. OK, this is for you game players. This is a multi-level maze game. The idea is to search each level for a "key" that will open a door to the next level. But you must fight your way through a variety of monsters. You will need a quick joystick hand and lot of practice.

10. Sideprint/Koala pictures. One of the first things I did when I purchased a printer was try out some picture dumps. With a little creativity, you can make great signs, posters, greeting cards, or whatever. But I, like a lot of other people, can't even draw a straight line. So, I began collecting Koala pictures. These are pictures drawn using various graphic painting programs, and either a joystick or a graphics tablet. There are many commercial programs that use these pictures, and I have had lots of fun dumping pictures in every size and shape. Sideprint is one of the better picture dump programs available in p/d.

One more program I want to add, but that doesn't quite make the "Top 10" is SpeedCalc. This is a spreadsheet program published by Compute. Lets face it, if you are looking for a computer to do spreadsheets, the 8-bit Atari falls short of the mark. You simply do not have the memory, and the 40 column display makes it extremely difficult to produce a good spreadsheet. But if you don't mind the limitations, SpeedCalc will do just fine. It has many of the features you will need, and is very fast!

OK, now it's your turn. I just know you are saying "what a jerky list!". So, send in your own list. We'll be glad to make you a PD critic!

**SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL  
USER'S GROUP!**

**SUMMER'S OVER -  
COME TO THE MEETINGS!**



# Programming

## C Language Course Lesson 2

by "r.s.", who I hope will soon upload Lesson 4  
and also tell us who he/she is!

In the first lesson, we basically explained some fundamental C concepts. We talked about the nature of compiled languages, the C environment, the preprocessor, constant and variable data names, the various C data types, and described a very simple one line C program.

I hope you have taken the time to become familiar with your compiler, linker, and shell (if you have one), and have compiled some sample programs (including the short one in the last lesson). In this lesson we will focus a little less on theory, and more on practical C programming experience.

Because of the extra operating systems in the ST (eg: GEMDOS, VDI, AES, BIOS, XBIOS), C programming on this machine can be quite different than described in a normal C textbook. There are approximately 250-300 extra functions that have been added to the C library to support the more involved (complex) nature of TOS. Most of these functions are involved with graphics and windowing concepts.

We will get to these advanced features when both you and I are satisfied that you can effectively program, and understand all of the language. For now, you should link your programs so they are TOS applications. This means that they will be using the text oriented environment, and will not be making use of special GEM graphics and windowing techniques.

We will also be using a special #include file for all these examples. Its name is `stdio.h`, which stands for standard input/output header file. Most C compilers have this file as part of their standard library. If your compiler does not have a file by this name, look in your compiler documentation for the standard I/O header file name.

### More On Printf

Since `printf` is perhaps the most commonly used function in the ST text environment, most of this lesson will be dedicated to it and the declaration of variables and constants.

The general form of the `printf` function is:

```
printf("format string", argument1,  
argument2,...);
```

Where "format string" represents literals, numeric constants, and special format symbols (conversion specifiers), and "argument" represents the variables, constants, and expressions to be printed.

### Printing Integers with Printf

The following conversion specifications can be given to print an integer using `printf`:

```
%d  in signed decimal notation  
%o  in octal notation  
%x  in hexadecimal notation
```

Lets try a simple example:

```
#include <stdio.h>  
main()  
{  
    int sample1, sample2, sample3;  
  
    sample1 = 255;  
    sample2 = 32744;  
    sample3 = 1970;  
  
    /* print in decimal */  
    printf("Sample1 in decimal=%d\n", sample1);  
    printf("Sample2 in decimal=%d\n", sample2);  
    printf("Sample3 in decimal=%d\n", sample3);  
  
    /* print in octal */  
    printf("Sample1 in octal=%o\n", sample1);  
    printf("Sample2 in octal=%o\n", sample2);  
    printf("Sample3 in octal=%o\n", sample3);  
  
    /* print in hex */  
    printf("Sample1 in hex=%x\n", sample1);  
    printf("Sample2 in hex=%x\n", sample2);  
    printf("Sample3 in hex=%x\n", sample3);  
}
```

You should examine the program carefully, and understand how the conversion specifiers are used because they are the core of the `printf` function.

Can you see how easy it would be to write a number base conversion program that used decimal, octal, and hexadecimal? Later on when we introduce keyboard input functions, we will write just a program.

This program could also be written a slightly different way using preprocessor constants, like this:

```
#include <stdio.h>  
#define HEX 0xFF  
#define DEC 32744  
#define OCT 016  
#define LONG 70000L
```

```

main()
{
    /* using printf with the preprocessor */
    printf("Hex number in decimal %d\n", HEX);
    printf("Decimal number in octal %o\n",
DEC);
    printf("Octal number in hex %x\n", OCT);
    printf("A long decimal %ld\n", LONG);
}

```

As you can see, there are many ways to represent an integer in C. Some of the notation used in the above example requires explanation. A constant in C has special notation depending on the number base you are using. The general form is like this:

```

1024 A normal decimal constant
0216 An octal constant (octal because of
the leading zero)
0xff A hexadecimal constant (because of
the leading "0x")
2233L A long constant (because of the
trailing "L")

```

Some pretty weird things will happen if you specify a numeric constant that is not in the range of the specific number base. Remember that octal numbers only go from zero to seven, hexadecimal numbers are from zero to the character F, etc.

Since integers can only be within a certain range (see lesson one for integer ranges), a special form of an integer is used to represent numbers outside the normal integer range. Its is called a long. It can be defined on the ST by using the keyword "long," or in a constant by putting the character "L" after the number. The lower case "l" can legally be used, but the upper case letter is much easier to distinguish from the number one.

Notice that in the example above, the value of the long is not really outside the normal integer range. I have used this notation to demonstrate that a number may be forced to a long using this method.

The last printf function call also shows you how to print a long. The conversion specifiers "%lo" and "%lx" are also valid for printing long octal numbers and long hex numbers respectively.

#### Printing Floats With Printf

A float is a rational number having a whole part and a fractional part. Refer to lesson one for the precision of a floating point number. Since floats use more memory space and take longer to calculate, they should be used sparingly. As a matter of fact, in all the C programs I have written, I have never used a float.

Consider the following program:

```

#include <stdio.h>
main()
{
    /* using printf to print floats */
    float sample1, sample2;

    sample1 = 25.667;
    sample2 = -625.799;

    printf("First float=%f\n", sample1);
    printf("Second %f=%f\n", sample2);
}

```

By now this example should be a little obvious to you. The only thing different is the two percent signs in the second printf statement. This is the way you can print the percent sign itself without confusing the printf function. The backslash can also be used in this manner (eg: \\).

#### Printing Characters and Strings With Printf

In C, a character variable or constant (char), can store one ASCII character. Here is an example:

```

#include <stdio.h>
main()
{
    char ch1, ch2, ch3, ch4;

    ch1 = 'H';
    ch2 = 'e';
    ch3 = 'l';
    ch4 = 'o';

    printf("%c%c%c%c\n", ch1, ch2, ch3, ch3,
ch4);
}

```

This little program will print "Hello" on the screen. A character in C is enclosed in apostrophes. An escape sequence can be used to represent non-printable control characters, like this:

```
ch1 = '\n';
```

This would assign the variable "ch1" to the ASCII newline character. Since a character (on the lower level) has an ASCII code, you can assign a character variable with an integer constant. Make certain that the value of the assignment is within the byte range of an ASCII character (0-255). At this point, I suggest that you purchase a book with an ASCII table for the ST so you can familiarize yourself with the ST character codes.

Here is the same program again, only using ASCII code assignments:



```
#include <stdio.h>
main()
{
    char ch1, ch2, ch3, ch4;

    ch1 = 72;
    ch2 = 101;
    ch3 = 108;
    ch4 = 111;

    printf("%c%c%c%c\n", ch1, ch2, ch3, ch4);
}
```

A string in C is nothing more than a series (array) of characters ending with a null marker. The null marker is standard in C and must be present in order to do any printing or string manipulation. If you initialize the data name as an array of characters (a string), the null is appended to the array automatically; therefore, you must declare one extra byte in your array to have enough room for the null marker. Also, all arrays in C start from element zero not one. Here is a string example:

```
#include <stdio.h>

char string[] = "This is a demonstration
string";
```

```
main()
{
    printf("%s\n", string);
}
```

As you can see, strings are printed with a "%s" conversion specifier. Notice the square brackets just after the name "string." These indicate that "string" is an array. Normally, there is a number inside these brackets to indicate how many elements there are in the array. By initializing the array automatically, the compiler does the counting and we need not concern ourselves with the actual element count.

There is a catch, however, and that is the reason why the array is set up outside of the main function. In a future lesson we will go into the scope, class, and lifetime of a variable and the reason will become clear.

#### Exercise Time

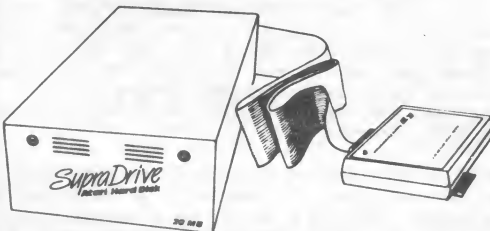
If this statement were part of a program, what would it print?

```
printf("%c%c%c\n", 'H', 105, '\41');
```

Next month: Arithmetic, Relational Operators and Logical Operators!

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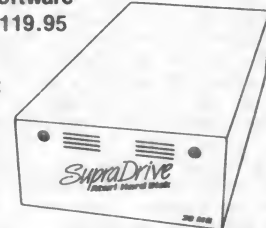
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The 5 W's  
by Randy Pearson (C.H.A.O.S.)

I've been running a BBS for two years come November, so I've seen many boards come and go.

I have found a pattern to explain the demise of many of them, and since I have nothing better, presently, to write about, I thought I'd enlighten you on the five W's of starting a BBS. (Even if you never plan on putting one up, this should, I hope, amuse you.) I'll start at the beginning. Nah, I'll start at the middle, and work my way around. I don't like taking the easy way out.

WHAT do you need to start a board? Well, first the basics. A computer, a modem, some form of storage (disk drive), and a phone line are needed. Without any of those, let's face it, your board won't go anywhere. But you may think that you would need an IBM with a 20 meg hard drive or a mainframe to run a BBS. No, of course not, silly. Many boards are run on Commodore 64s and Ataris, and I've even called TI-994A, TRS-80 model 1, and CoCo boards in the past. You also don't need a hard drive to run a decent board. I started on 2 Atari floppies, and I've seen successful boards run on one Commodore drive. Of course, if you plan on running a download board, or want many files and a large message base, you will be laughed off the phone lines without the proper storage.

Once again, a modem is a modem. Unless you have something like an Atari 835, which doesn't auto answer, any modem will do. (Well, you COULD run a BBS with an acoustic modem, but I hope you either like sitting next to your phone all day, or you have kids which you can pay/force to do this.) I'll talk more about the phone line later.

There are other pieces of equipment that, if you want to be a HIGHLY RESPECTED SysOp, you should consider. A biggie is having a second computer system. The main reason for this is so that you won't be taking your board down every so often to write a story, or play Joust.

You can go all out, and get a complete second system, with modem and disk drive. This I suggest. In my case, I let my ST run the board, and I use my 64k 600XL system to write, (this very article, as a matter of fact), play Joust, and modemize. You don't need to start right out with two systems. I slowly built mine up, using my 400 as system number 2 after I procured an 800 for the BBS.

WHAT else do you need? Well, once you convince your computer to agree to being left on all the time, the next step is finding some BBS software. Now, if you have an Atari, or any other 'normal' computer, finding software is not difficult. Finding software you actually LIKE may be another problem entirely. My suggestion is to look around. DON'T just grab the first thing you see. For Atari alone, there are many public domain programs (AMIS, FoReM) and many other commercially available (Express, Karnia, Nite Lite, Carnival, BBCS). Find people who know these programs, and call boards that run it. Everybody wants something different out of their system. Me, I wanted a menu driven system (menus to tell you what you can do, then when you see what you want, you hit the corresponding letter and it stops the menu and executes your command) so I picked BBCS, the Bulletin Board Construction Set.

And that taught me another valuable lesson. Call some boards that run the software you want, and ask them how they like it! See if it crashes a lot, has annoying bugs, etc. SysOps are the best people to ask, since they, unlike authors and companies, have no reason to lie and exaggerate! (And by the way, get a legal copy of the program. Support is SO nice! Nite Lite has a support BBS, for SysOps only, and so do others.)

One final thought on the 'what' aspect. If you want to be at all respected as a BBS SysOp, there are things you should consider. The biggest is the buying of a separate line. If you can't afford a separate line, don't bother.

You can run a successful part time board off of your voice line, but it will be SO much hassle! People will call at ALL hours, no matter what time you set as BBS time. And the inverse, you'll flip out Aunt Martha when she calls you, only to get a weird beeping. Besides, people look down on part time boards. I do. Also, many will look down on you if you only run at 300 baud. I don't, however, and if you only have 300, don't rush out and buy 1200.

Many good boards run 300 only. But if you plan on carrying downloads, or are in the boonies, and plan on being only 300, you better be REALLY worth it!

WHEN should you run a board? Sounds like a stupid question, but really it is something to consider. Should a SysOp be a certain age? Of course not, silly. NEVER underestimate a young SysOp! They are usually the most inventive. So the 'WHEN' is not about age. The question is, how long after you get your modem should you consider running a board? That's not easily answered, since everybody is different. But I can almost guarantee you that at least half of new BBSs that die within their first couple months were run by kids (oops, there I go, stereotyping....) who put up a board after

calling their first one. There is so much more to running a board than just supplying the computer! And to find out all these little idiosyncrasies, one really must be IN the BBS community for a while. I called boards for well over a year before I became a SysOp. And even then, I did not jump straight in. I was a Co-SysOp on Benchboard for a number of months, and that helped me so much! But by calling around first, you can see how different people run boards, and it will help you to figure out just what you want out of yours! You will meet the people of the modem world, and make many friends while doing so. Most BBS people act similarly when they see an ad for a new BBS, when the SysOp is unfamiliar. They moan, and say, "Oh, who does he think HE is?!" (And, I hate to say it, but it seems that the most boring, lifeless boards were run by a person who had only had a modem for a week before deciding to take the plunge.)

Ok, now for the 'Who.' Whoops, I just answered that. S'ok, never mind, then. But let me just add that you will find that the best boards are almost always run by people who KNEW what they wanted to make their BBS into, before they went ahead with it.

Where....Where should a person run a BBS? Ok, another stupid one, but let's think about this one. It doesn't really matter where you live, but if you live in a small town that is many miles away from the bigger cities, and is thus long distance, people won't call you unless you are REALLY worth it. So, if you live off in the boonies, it may very well be a consideration NOT to run a board.

The last question is WHY. Why do you even want to run a board? I'll bet you non-SysOps out there think it's so bloody easy, don't you? Well, I got news for ya. It's not all beer and Skittles. (Whatever that means.) Ask any SysOp. There are many aspects to running a board, and it will keep you busy. I won't go into what all we do now, but look for another article from me later, if you care. Matter of fact, DO ask a SysOp or two what it's like. They will more than likely stutter, and give you a useless answer, but you may get some info out of them. But being a SysOp, be prepared for ANYTHING! Because you will get just that. But it makes for some fun!

So, I hope this helped. Good luck, you future Compuserve you!



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## **ST Review**

ST Review: Regent Word II  
by John Johnson (C.H.A.O.S.)

Regent Word II is the upgraded version of Regent Word, a word processor which was released two years ago by Regent Software.

Regent Word II is a solid, well written program that stacks up well against other word processors currently available for the ST. This program offers block editing functions; search and replace functions; style features: bold/underline/italic/super- and sub- scripts; rulers and formatting. Regent Word II also offers advanced features such as word count, a 30,000 word expandable spelling checker, and a program to create printer drivers. Regent Word II is run entirely in the GEM environment and can be used with other Regent software such as Regent Base and Mail Merge Database.

I guess this is where I can begin to editorialize. The first thing I would recommend to a new Regent Word II owner is to quickly delete the DESKTOP.INF file that comes with on the disk and replace it with one of your favorites. The program comes up in red and blue, which, while being very patriotic, doesn't do much for your eyesight.

Regent Word II is set up to use rulers to set the margins, line spacing, font style and page breaks. This is graphically a nice feature. Regent Word II also allows you to use as many rulers as you see fit. Using rulers to set page breaks seems to be a clumsy an inefficient use of the GEM operating system. It would be nice to be able to just take the mouse and click where you want a page break, instead you must go up to the menu bar, choose INSERT RULER, and then ask for a page break. Too many steps for me. This is the general impression I get from this program, however. GEM is set up to allow you to use a mouse, but evidently the people who wrote this program only know how to use menu bars. An ideal word processor program should allow you to use the mouse, menu bar and control sequences. The mouse can be used to position the cursor in Regent Word II, but cannot be dragged to identify a block, as in better word processors (although F6 and F7 can be used to mark blocks). It would be nice to allow you to enter a control sequence or a function key instead of going to the menu for repetitive tasks.

Two good features are word count and spell. Word count is a menu driven feature that counts the number of words in your document, and is

something that I am surprised has not been incorporated in more word processors. Spell is a menu driven and expandable spelling checker. Spell allows you to spell check your entire document and add words to the dictionary that it doesn't know (up to 100,000 words). This feature would be more useful if you could use it on individual words as well, instead of having to check the whole document. Also, spell cannot be set to continuously check your spelling as you type, this is a rather large oversight.

Another unique feature that I particularly like is ALPHABETIZE. This will take and alphabetize your file; although, I found no way to just alphabetize a paragraph. In order to test Regent Word II I decided to be nasty and loaded in a dictionary (Webster's: 25,121 words) that I had previously typed in by hand last summer (O.K., so I was bored....). Regent Word II took only about half a minute to load this 233K file, and about 5 seconds to word count. But, and here was the real test, when I asked it to alphabetize the file it went into a coma. Six hours later I could not tell that any progress had been made and I cold booted the system to try again. I must have over stressed the program. Regent Word II did a good job of alphabetizing smaller files, but I have written BASIC programs (in ST BASIC) that ran quicker. I tried to spell check the document but after ZAMBIAN, ZECH, and a few other z-words weren't found I changed my mind. I was surprised, however, to find that the on-line dictionary is one of the few to include some of the more colorful phrases that may be found on word processors of the 80's.

Regent Word II allows you to set up to 10 special fonts. This feature can only be implemented if your printer can print alternate font sets. If you want to implement these special fonts you need to run PRINTER.PRQ and create yourself a printer driver. This is not hard, if you know the control sequences to send to your printer. And, if you cannot get your printer driver to work Regent Software will, for \$10. These should be available in the manual that came with your printer. Although Regent Word II is a WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) word processor, these fonts will not show up on the screen. You will not easily forget where you use special fonts, since you must use a new ruler each time you change fonts. This is also a problem because it doesn't allow you to change fonts (as far as I could tell) within a line.

The styling features are pretty much the necessary ones: italic, underline, bold, and sub/superscript. These show up on the screen, however the underline feature will only underline text; this means you cannot type titles, etc., because unwanted blanks show up.

Also, along the lines of styling, Regent Word II allows single, 1 1/2, double and triple spacing; this is a feature that many word processors tend to leave out.

Warning, if you don't have a printer hooked up to your computer, don't hit PRINT DOCUMENT! You will be forced to reboot, even if you choose 0 pages (I tried this). However, Regent Word II does come with a good assortment of printers to choose from (18 styles) and allows you to easily build new printer drivers if yours isn't listed.

The most redeeming features of Regent Word II is it's ability to interface with Mail Merge Database and Regent Base. It is possible to hit control M and insert mail merge characters.

If you buy Mail Merge Database and Regent Base, then you can draw on names (or whatever you want) and print up form letters, reports, labels, and so on.

Regent Word II lists for \$99.95 but I have seen it for around \$70 mail order. If you own Regent Base or want to utilize the mail merge abilities of this word processor your money will be well spent, however, if you just want a good solid word processor this may be a bit overpriced for what it gives you. If you fall into the later category I would recommend a less expensive word processor with more features, such as Word Writer by Timeworks (which also has a built in dictionary), a PD word count accessory and possibly Thunder! by Batteries Included if you are a REALLY rotten speller (if they are still in business when you read this). On a scale of 1 to 10, I rate Regent Word II a 7.

|||||



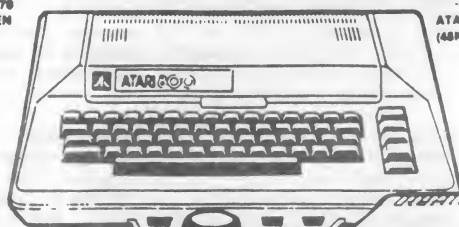
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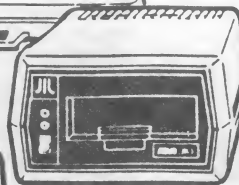
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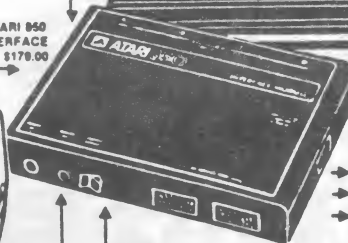
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REMEMBER WHEN?...the above ad ran in the June, 1981 issue of "SoftSide" magazine. Take note of the \$999.00 price for a 48K 800, and the value of today's ST becomes even clearer! - Reprint, courtesy of Raphael Nunez.



MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE 29 September 1987





## Last Hacks

### NEW ATARI GOES HIGH CAMP by Scott Andersen

(Scott Anderson is the current President of STARFLEET Atari User Group of Denver, Colorado.

This was first printed in the MILE HIGH Atari Magazine and is excerpted.)

At first it was just rumors. I'm sure you've heard some of them. Mergers and /or joint ventures. Atari and AT&T. Atari and Teledyne. Atari and whomever. But this one is confirmed. I saw the proof at last months outdoors exposition.

Atari is involved in a joint venture with Coleman Western, the outdoor products giant. The offspring of this marriage is the Coleman Camp Computer, hereafter known as the CCC.

It was on display in one corner of the Coleman booth at the outdoor show, with an Atari rep in attendance to demo the machine. It is quite a machine. Its most impressive feature is its ability to function without a power supply; the CCC uses white gas (Coleman Fuel) like so many other Coleman appliances. After filling the tank with fuel and pressurizing the system by hand pumping, you start up by firing the pilot/burner. The gas flame heats a sealed fluid system which powers a micro turbine generator. This in conjunction with a regulator provides all the voltage you need to power the CCC and all of its peripherals. The CCC is a 128K machine that utilizes the 6502 processor.

It has a new O.S. that is completely compatible with all Atari and third party software. Two built-in languages are switched on or off via a three way rocker switch, they are Basic (of course) and Action. Atari apparently had a large quantity of 400 keyboards that they decided to use up on the CCC. While being a pain to type on, the use of the membrane keyboard is understandable on a product that can be left out in the rain. Yes, the CCC is completely weatherproof. Rubber doors cover the 4 joystick ports, the I/O port, the serial/expansion bus, and the built-in disk drive and modem. The disk drive is a half height 5-1/4" that uses single or enhanced

density. The modem is something completely different. It is said to be almost Hayes compatible, the exception being that it can't answer. This is understandable, you have no phone number. At the end of the 25 foot modem cable is a special induction device that you merely clamp over any phone cable. No pins, no plugs, no muss, no fuss. The device can only originate calls, but it can do it anywhere there is a telephone line, be it the backwoods or your back yard. 1200 Baud too! All this and only 14.4 pounds. But if that seems too heavy for you backpackers, the fuel tank/pump/burner/stand assembly can be detached.

The remaining unit, at 8.3 pounds, can be used at any campsite simply by setting it on the campfire. Included in the \$450 price are three new pieces of software.

The first, "Campcalc", is a wilderness management program. The second, "Camp-Talk", synthesizes bird and animal calls. The third is a graphics masterpiece. It is a Conestoga Wagon simulator called "Yerass". No more boring evenings around the campfire.

#### Coleman Camping Computer Update

Yes, since announced in the June 1986 issue of Mile High Magazine, Coleman products, has barely been able to keep up with the orders for the Coleman Camping Computer, let alone develop any new enhancements for the popular system. Due to some heat dissipation problems, the Camp Fire power system has been dropped in favor of a new system using three 6 foot solar panels, generating enough heat to move a small turbin, which in turn is hooked to a generator.

This seems to be a much safer system, then the camp fire unit, and is ready to ship as of this writing. Estimated cost is a reasonable \$1250 plus shipping. Estimated weight is 2200 pounds.

DuckPuck Direct, Wholesalers for Idaho has jumped on the CCC bandwagon with a couple of new third party software products for the Camp Talk Synthesis System. The premier release is the DOMESTIC ANIMAL DATA DISK. Wouldn't Old McDonald be envious! For those of you that live on a farm and would like to have exciting conversations with your horses, cows, pigs and chickens. Requires version 26 of ODS (Out Door Operating system.)

Also soon to be released: EXOTIC BIRD DATA DISK: Also for the Camp Talk Module, this is for those of you planing a trip down the Amazon who would like to keep in touch with the local wildlife. Another sure hit product from DuckPuck.

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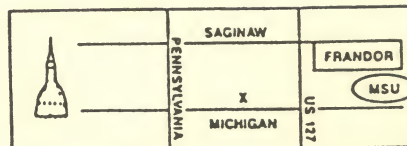
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